

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

No claims are currently being cancelled.

Claim 1 is currently being amended.

No claims are being added.

This amendment and reply amends a claim in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1, 7, 12 and 13 are pending in this application.

Discussion of Amendments to Claim 1:

In claim 1 prior to the amendments made herein, there was no explicit recitation as to which side of the valve plate the coating layer is provided. Claim 1 has been amended to make such a feature explicit.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,006,785 to Iverson; claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,318,980 to Kurihara in view of Iverson; and claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iverson. These rejections are traversed with respect to the presently pending claims under rejection, for at least the reasons given below.

In Iverson's valve, a sealing plate 10 for providing a clearance is provided on a surface that is not opposed to a valve seat 25. In this regard, please compare Figure 1 of the present application with Figure 3 of Iverson. In Figure 4C of the drawings, a coating layer 29 is provided so as to form a predetermined clearance between an opposing part 26 and a valve seat 23. On the contrary, referring now to Figure 3 of Iverson, Iverson's sealing plate 10

cannot form a clearance between his valve seat 25 and an opposed surface of his leaf spring 15 (closure portion 17).

Accordingly, for at least this reason, presently pending independent claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Iversen.

Furthermore, Iversen's "sealing plate 10" corresponds closest to the "sheet member 60" in the present application (see Figure 6 of the drawings [3rd embodiment]). The "sealing plate 10" of Iversen is not a coating layer. Thus, the assertions made on page 3 of the Office Action regarding Iversen's sealing plate 10 corresponding to the claimed coating layer are incorrect.

Therefore, for this additional reason, presently pending independent claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Iversen.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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